UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/C.3/51/L.41/Rev.1
27 November 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-first session
THIRD COMMITTEE
Agenda item 110 (c)

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: revised draft resolution

Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

The General Assembly,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] and the International Covenants on Human Rights,[2]

Recalling that the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993,[3] reaffirmed that human rights and fundamental freedoms were the birthright of all human beings and that their protection and promotion was the first responsibility of Governments,

Reaffirming that all Member States have a duty to fulfil the obligations they have undertaken under the various international instruments in this field,

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[3] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

Mindful that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party to the International Covenants on Human Rights,

Recalling the appointment by the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights of Mr. Maurice Danby Copithorne as Special Representative of the Commission on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran,

Recalling its previous resolutions expressing concern at the violations of human rights by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the most recent, resolution 50/188 of 22 December 1995, and the resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights, including the most recent, resolution 1996/84 of 24 April 1996, and of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, including the most recent, resolution 1996/7 of 20 August 1996,

Welcoming the cooperation extended by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on religious intolerance and the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on freedom of opinion and expression, who have been able to visit the Islamic Republic of Iran, and bearing in mind the reports of those Special Rapporteurs on their visits,[1]

Taking note of the interim report of the Special Representative of 11 October 1996,[2] and the addendum to it and noting that he will present a further report to the Commission on Human Rights,

Welcoming the requests by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for technical assistance and advisory services from the Office of the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights, as well as from the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, and taking note with interest of the observation by the Special Representative in this regard,

Taking note with interest of certain recent developments in the Islamic Republic of Iran which, in the view of the Special Representative, are indicators of potential improvement of the status of women in that country,

Considering that continued international scrutiny of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Islamic Republic of Iran is warranted and that the subject should remain on the agenda of the General Assembly,

1. Expresses its concern at the continuing violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in particular the high number of executions in the absence of internationally recognized safeguards, cases of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the failure to meet international standards with regard to the administration of justice and the absence of due process of law, violations of the right to peaceful assembly and restrictions on the freedom of expression, thought, opinion and the press;

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[1] E/CN.4/1996/95/Add.2 and Corr.1 and E/CN.4/1996/39/Add.2.

[2] A/51/479.

2. Also expresses its concern at the grave breaches of human rights of the Baha'is in the Islamic Republic of Iran and situations of discrimination against the members of this religious community, as well as at the discriminatory treatment of minorities by reason of their religious beliefs, including lack of adequate protection for the Christian minorities, some members of which have been the target of intimidation and assassination;

3. Further expresses its concern at the widespread discrimination against women in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the lack of full and equal enjoyment by women of human rights, and calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to take effective measures to eliminate all discrimination against women;

4. Urges the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a State party to the International Covenants on Human Rights, to abide by its freely undertaken obligations under the Covenants and under other international instruments on human rights, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including members of religious groups and persons belonging to minorities, enjoy all the rights enshrined in those instruments;

5. Calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance relating to the Baha'is and to other minority religious groups, including Christians;

6. Expresses its grave concern at indications, according to the information received by the Special Representative, of a significant toughening of criminal legislation and its application in Iran and in particular at the incidence of capital punishment imposed for apostasy and non-violent crimes, in violation of the relevant provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the United Nations safeguards;

7. Expresses its concern at the harassment and persecution of persons, including writers and members of the press, seeking to exercise their freedom of expression;

8. Calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement existing agreements with international humanitarian organizations;

9. Expresses its grave concern that there are continuing threats to the life of Mr. Salman Rushdie, as well as to individuals associated with his work, which appear to have the support of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, notes in this regard that efforts aimed at obtaining satisfactory written assurances from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran that it does not support these threats have so far been unsuccessful, and calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to provide such assurances;

10. Deplores the politically motivated continuing violence against Iranians outside the Islamic Republic of Iran, and urges the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to refrain from activities against members of the Iranian opposition living abroad and the harassment of their relatives within

Iran, and to cooperate wholeheartedly with the authorities of other countries in investigating and punishing offences reported by them;

11. Welcomes the cooperation extended by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Special Representative, who has been able to conduct a preliminary visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran;

12. Expresses its hope that the Special Representative will again be allowed to visit the Islamic Republic of Iran in the discharge of his mandate;

13. Requests the Secretary-General to give all necessary assistance to the Special Representative to enable him to discharge his mandate fully;

14. Decides to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Baha'is, during its fifty-second session under the item entitled "Human rights questions", on the basis of the report of the Special Representative and in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council.